

## NEW PUBLICATIONS.

**AN ACTOR'S MISCELLANIES.**  
A MINGLED YARN. Sketches on Various Subjects. By HENRY EDWARDS, Comedian. 12mo., pp. 157. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

In this handsome little volume the well-known and admired comedian, Mr. Henry Edwards, of Wallack's Theatre, has collected some of his prose writings, under the happy title of "A Mingled Yarn." This Shakespearian phrase is found in "All's Well That Ends Well," and a line from that comedy serves as a motto for this book—"The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together." The volume is dedicated to the members of the Bohemian Club of San Francisco; and the author states, in a brief and modest preface, that "these simple sketches have been collected and placed before the public eye, solely in obedience to the wishes of friends." Simple is the right word with which to describe these writings. Their spirit is straightforward, spontaneous and devoid of pretension. But, in addition to simplicity, they possess grace, quaintness, warmth and tender feeling, and frequent touches of playful humor. Mr. Edwards—remarkable for attainments in science no less than for versatile proficiency in the art of acting—presents a rare type of the union of talents greatly divergent and seldom found in one and the same person. His pages, accordingly, while teeming with picturesque description, playful turns of humor, bits of mace and sentiment, and keen analysis of character, present abundance of scientific knowledge and are marked by that breadth of thought and serenity of mood which naturally characterize a mind that has long and lovingly communed with Nature. One of the most fervid and eloquent of the articles in this book is an address on "Iron and Its Relation to Civilization," and certainly no one would expect to find such a theme treated with every essential attribute of practical knowledge by the representative of old *Rockett, Maz Hawkeye and Master Walter*.

Another, and the longer of the sketches, is descriptive of the strange Mexican city of Mazatlan, which the author visited in 1874, and which he depicts with abundance of details both lifelike and humorous. His description of the coast scenery and the first prospect of this Spanish settlement is a picture both rich and tempting and at the same time a significant example of what may be done in writing by the use of the direct words which are prompted by any special feeling or mental impulse. He notes the "cargadores," one of whom bore a packet of seven boxes of claret, and another a piano, upon his back, with no apparent effort or inconvenience. There were huge spiders and cockroaches in his bed-room, and these insects swarmed forth by night; but the delighted entomologist only records that the spiders, "though formidable looking, are quite harmless," and that he was charmed on discovering "at least one new species of cockroach"—which we may be sure was then and there switched from life with the merciful tines of chloroform, and duly perforated with the pin of science. A particularly interesting portion of this sketch is an account of that hideous狂人, Manuel Lozada, who secured some little political importance twenty odd years ago, and whom this traveller saw in his days of sovereign authority in Mazatlan. Mr. Edwards also describes two balloon ascensions which had almost the same success as those which were effected by the other was entirely successful.

"All fear" says the scientist, "was lost in contemplation of the majesty around me." Another notable article is a defense of the stage against the vague and groundless accusations of the critics, and an illiberal elegancy. The opinion on Shakespeare is a thorough and judicious piece of work, and several of the tributes to friends dead and gone fitly portray their themes with singular fidelity, but reveal, in impressive prominence, the large-hearted, tender, and constant spirit of the author. Louis Agassiz and Edwin H. Chapin are among those who are mentioned, and it is impossible to mistake the sincerity, equality of grief and affection with which this has been done. Mr. Edwards does not, in this book, aim at prominence of literature nor show of perfect master of style, but he has treated a number of attractive topics in an earnest, interesting manner, and set forth the rich resources of a well-stored mind and the sympathetic charm of a fine humanity. As we close the volume we think of Wordsworth's homely, noble lines:

One lesson, shepherd, let us two divide,  
Touched both by what she shows and what conceals,—  
Never to blemish our pleasure or our pride.  
With sorrow of the innocent thing that feels.

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